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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 002603

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2022
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [KPAL](#) [EUN](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN POSITIONS AT AND EXPECTATIONS OF 10/15
GAERC

REF: STATE 141316

Classified By: Econ/Pol Couns Dean Yap. Reason:
1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. According to the Austrian MFA European Correspondent (EC), the WTO/DDA negotiations have been dropped from the agenda of the 10/15 GAERC. He expects only perfunctory discussion of Libya and Russia. The MEPP discussion will focus on a German proposal to develop an EU action plan and the Iraq discussion will look at ways for the EU to engage more deeply. EC saw little realistic prospect for a Syria-Lebanon border mission. Discussion of Chad will focus on EU financial arrangements. EC reported as well that a UK proposal to name an EU Special Envoy to Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan, and the constitution/IGC are also on the agenda. See Septel for report on Iran. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Econ/Pol Couns met 10/11 with MFA European Correspondent Andreas Riecken for a discussion of Austrian positions at and expectations of the upcoming EU GAERC.

WTO/DDA

¶3. (C) Riecken reported that this item had been dropped from the agenda. In a separate conversation with Econoff, Gabriella Habermayer, head of the Economics Ministry's Multilateral Trade Division, reported that the issue had been mooted by France and some others largely to remind the Trade Commissioner of the limits of his mandate. Habermayer confirmed that Austria shares the U.S. view of the unhelpful stance of a number of large developing countries. She also reported an Austrian concern that the Commission's Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations with ACP countries are complicating the DDA negotiations.

Kosovo

¶4. (C) Riecken noted that it would be difficult to get a definitive readout of the Kosovo discussion because it is scheduled to take place during lunch, with only Ministers, Solana and Council notetakers present. Though he expected no decisions, he did expect the discussion to move the EU toward agreement (with some members "constructively abstaining") on deploying an ESDP mission after a UDI. He was still concerned about the legal basis for such a step, noting that UNSCR 1244 was at best an ambiguous basis and that EU states who would not recognize a UDI were arguing that an invitation for the mission from a state not recognized by all EU members would also not be sufficient legal basis.

Russia and Libya

¶5. (C) Riecken did not expect much substantive discussion of

either topic. He noted that Belgium had proposed adding Libya to the agenda because of a concern that some member states wanted to move to quickly to improve relations with Tripoli. The item might, he thought, be dropped from the agenda.

MEPP

¶16. (C) Riecken reported that Germany had proposed the EU develop an action plan for supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, but that Austria and, he thought, most member states, were reluctant to begin working in detail on such a project until after the expected November Conference.

Iraq

¶17. (C) Riecken reported that the Council hoped to develop ideas for greater EU engagement in Iraqi stabilization and reconstruction. He welcomed reftel ideas on ways in which the EU could support these processes.

Syria-Lebanon Border

¶18. (C) Riecken expects the Council will endorse an exploratory mission that would investigate the possibilities of a mission, but perceives little enthusiasm or real prospects for such a mission. In a separate conversation Oct. 10, a representative of the MFA's Middle East Division reported that there is a strong desire to be supportive of Lebanon in the EU and that she would expect Lebanese concerns to be reflected in the mandate of any EU exploratory/fact-finding mission.

Chad

¶19. (C) Riecken reported that France will use the Council discussion to make a plea for greater common financing for its portion of the Chad mission. He welcomed the U.S. offer of support.

Burma

¶10. (C) This item could lead to some lively discussion because of differing views within the EU on whether to extend or impose new sanctions on Burma, Riecken thought. He acknowledged that Austria is among those least interested in new sanctions, which he said must be carefully tailored to avoid harming the poor majority. He did suggest that it might be possible to look at sanctions on the lumber trade, as Austria understands that this trade is almost exclusively controlled by the ruling junta and/or its members. Austria would also look carefully at any expansion of existing sanctions. Austria shares the U.S. view that it is important to work with ASEAN in dealing with India, China, and Japan.

Other Issues

¶11. (C) Riecken reported briefly on three other items on the Council's agenda: 1) The session will open with a discussion on the revised constitution and planning for the next IGC. 2) At the request of the UK, the Council will discuss naming a Special Envoy to Zimbabwe. Riecken thought the proposal would probably not be endorsed. 3) A discussion of Uzbekistan is also on the agenda, but without any items for decision.

Kilner